

mechanisms for drugs and pharmaceuticals and promoting the availability of safe, efficacious, affordable and quality medicines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE): (a) to (c) The 6th BRICS Health Ministers meeting held at New Delhi recognized the need for concluding a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on regulatory collaboration between the drug regulatory authorities of BRICS countries with a view to improving regulatory standards, certification and systems for medical products.

The following areas have been identified for collaboration between BRICS drug regulatory authorities:

- (i) Regulation of medical products, Medical Devices, Biological Products, Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs).
- (ii) Pharmacovigilance,
- (iii) Pharmacopoeia and quality of medical products.
- (iv) Sharing of regulatory experience.

Blanket ban of Tobacco consumption

†621. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government believes that tobacco consumption is harmful for life;
- (b) if so, whether Government is considering to impose blanket ban on the consumption of tobacco in the country; and
- (c) if so, by when the ban is expected to be imposed and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE): (a) As per the "Report on Tobacco Control in India" published in 2004, about 8-9 lakhs deaths per year are attributable to tobacco related diseases.

(b) No. However, there is ban on sale of cigarettes and other tobacco products to and by persons below the age of eighteen years, within 100 yards of educational institutions and ban on promotion/advertisement of cigarettes and other tobacco products, under Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement, Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(COTPA, 2003) and Rules made thereunder. Further, there is ban on manufacture, storage, distribution or sale of food products containing tobacco or nicotine, such as Gutkha, *vide* the Food Safety Regulations issued in 2011 under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.

(c) Does not arise.

Mandatory rural postings of doctors

622. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) urban and rural classification of the current shortage of doctors and nurses in the country and the steps being taken by Government to help fill this shortage;

(b) the steps being taken by Government to encourage and motivate doctors and nurses to take up rural postings; and

(c) whether Government proposes to make rural postings for doctors and nurses mandatory and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE): (a) No such bifurcated data with regard to urban and rural areas is maintained Centrally. However, as per Rural Health Statistics (RHS), 2015, data related to:

- Doctors at Primary Health Centres (PHCs) is given in the Statement-I (*See below*);
- Nursing Staff at PHCs and CHCs is given in the Statement-II (*See below*);
- Doctors at District Hospital and Sub-District/Sub-Divisional Hospital is given in the Statement-III (*See below*);
- Para Medical Staff at District Hospital and Sub-District/Sub-Divisional Hospital is given in the Statement-IV (*See below*);

Further, as per information provided by Medical Council of India, there are a total number of 9,88,922 allopathic doctors registered with the State Medical Council/ Medical Council of India as on 30th June, 2016. The Government has taken the following steps to increase the number of doctors in the country:

- (i) The ratio of teachers to students has been revised from 1:1 to 1:2 for all MD/MS disciplines and 1:1 to 1:3 in subjects of Anaesthesiology, Forensic Medicine, Radiotherapy, Medical Oncology, Surgical Oncology and Psychiatry.